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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 004048

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SUBJECT: CHINESE MFA ON BURMESE JUNTA'S CALL TO RECONVENE
NATIONAL CONVENTION

Classified By: Robert Griffiths, Acting Political Counselor. Reasons 1
.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) MFA Burma Desk officer Liang Jianjun told poloff June 14 that the Burmese regime's recent announcement that it will reconvene the National Convention July 18 was no surprise. Liang said the regime's leaders told Chinese officials they aim to finish a statement of principles for drafting a new constitution by August. China consistently has urged Burma to push forward with reconciliation, Liang said, noting that some mutual trust has been established with minority groups, but that full agreement will be difficult to reach in the current atmosphere.

¶2. (C) China believes economic development is the most serious problem facing Burma, Liang said, although he listed the following as other significant issues:

- difficulties in resolving disputes over land and resources with minority groups at odds with the Central Government and
- international pressure over the regime's human rights, forced labor, disease control policies and narco-trafficking.

¶3. (C) Poloff asked about reports that a Chinese diplomat had described Burma's new capital Nay Pyi Taw in unflattering terms on an MFA website. Liang said that the description had been a mistake and should not have been publicized. He admitted, however, that Chinese diplomats find it very difficult to travel to the new capital and that MFA officials in Beijing are sympathetic to these complaints.

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